

FACTS AND FANCIES FOR WOMAN AND THE HOME CIRCLE

THE DAILY
SHORT STORY

The Old Order Changeth.

By JANE OSBORN.

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"YOU may be only a poor typhist," smug little Aunt Caroline had told her niece Babette, "but you are a lady—or are entitled to call yourself one so long as you don't do any things that are unworthy of a real lady."

Aunt Caroline had never done any of those things; in fact, she had worked at rather trying odds for the last ten years in the uptown flat where she kept house for her own four sons and daughters and her niece Babette.

And they had all remained ladies—the old and the young, the sons and the daughters, the three boys had, so far as the good mother knew, remained "perfect gentlemen"—in spite of the three lights up and the dingy, bare, painted walls of the kitchen where Caroline's work never seemed to be done, and in spite of the debts there had been to pay after the husband's long illness.

On the parlor table there was a copy of a well-known book on so-called social usage, and although the chapter on candle parties and the advice the writer of the book gave on "how to act when meeting the English royal family," and how to write to the Archbishop of Canterbury had been of little use to Caroline, she found much of it immensely helpful to her in her task.

The fact was that Caroline had, as she said, seen very much better days in the years when she and her cousin, Babette's mother—for Babette was not a real niece—had, for one brief season, lived in a society that never found a way to Caroline's poor little widow's way.

Then came the marriage of Caroline and Babette's mother and the death of both Babette's parents, the death of Caroline's husband, the bringing up of the children in the ways of gentleness, and then, a year ago, Babette's engagement to Caroline's eldest son—who, to be sure, was only a sort of third cousin.

The courtship was conducted along lines that would have been approved even by the author of that book on social decorum on Caroline's parlor table. The young people, reminded that they were not well bred to go to the theater unchaperoned, never went to the movies on a Saturday night without Caroline in tow, though poor Caroline sometimes endured all kinds of torment fearing that she was a hindrance to their good time. And Caroline remembered that when Babette's mother and she had been engaged they had permitted their lovers more than the merest kisses, and those on the lips.

Engagements are sometimes broken, but had been told, and a "real lady" would never cease regretting the fact that she had ever allowed any more passionate salute from a man who did not become her husband. So Caroline had told Babette and her son and, though they had been engaged a year, there was but one salute a day and she very decorously upon the cheek.

When the first Christmas of their engagement came about Christmas had reminded her children that "well-bred engaged people did not give personal presents." The young man, besides the engagement ring, should give nothing but "flowers, books and candy." Her own husband had given her a copy of Tennyson's poems on the Christmas they were engaged, and the young man now reposed beneath the book on good form on the parlor table.

He had given her roses on all holidays and candies every week-end. There was no reason, Caroline said, why her son should not do as much for Babette. He could afford it, for he was now getting a generous salary. Babette didn't often protest, but she was a practical bit of a girl, and when she might have been making a collection of useful household things given her by her husband-to-be—as other girls she knew did—she took small pleasure in the little bunch of roses that faded on her bureau after every holiday nor in the candies that she shared with her cousins every week-end.

From her own slender earnings she might have bought things that would eventually have helped feather the nest, too, but Caroline assured her that would not have been in good form. The great authority especially cautioned young women against giving anything of a personal or intimate nature to their fiancés.

Books, book accessories, accessories of sport—a riding crop, or something of the sort, were the things suggested, and as Caroline's eldest son, Stephen, had no desk save the office one he rolled at eight hours a day, and knew no sports save struggling with the crowds on his daily trip to and from that office, Babette's choice was limited to books.

He liked the Stevenson and the Kipling she had given him, but how much sooner they could have been married instead of those books she could have given him something that would do for the little flat—chairs and tables, or a rug, perhaps?

It was three weeks before Christmas and Babette and Stephen had each secretly decided to linger after office hours to make the Christmas purchases. Unknown to each other they were both part of the great throng that swarmed one of the department stores not far from their places of work. At the door of the store Babette had received a little holly-decked card, and on it were words something like this:

"The patriotic gift this year is the useful gift. We feel it our duty to urge our customers to refrain from buying non-essentials. So, instead of displaying a large stock of Christmas candies and our usual Christmas books and flowers, we are recommending this useful household articles and pieces of apparel."

LITTLE DRESS
FOR PLAYTIME

By BETTY BROWN.

A charming indoor frock for the little girl who "doesn't go to school yet" is this cheery slip-on dress of coral-colored chambray, with white pique collar and cuffs, pearl buttons and black bow. It is comfortable, easily laundered, and becoming. Made in cloth it is a splendid all-purpose frock for the small person.

ture and kitchen things. There she ran almost precipitately into tepher. He, too, was holding one of the little holly-decked cards.

"I have been looking at a set of dishes," he said. "Maybe after we are married we can get one." He pressed Babette's hand—perhaps that wasn't exactly in good form, but the crowd was pushing close beside them and no one could have seen "It's pretty hard to wait," he said. "Babette, if we had the things, just a few things to start housekeeping on, perhaps we wouldn't have to wait long. Perhaps in February—I heard today I'm to get a good raise at New Year's."

"If, instead of getting each other a set of Scott or Dickens we could get that set of dishes and some things to cook with—" faltered Babette.

"I could give mother \$10 every week and still have enough to run our little flat on," whispered Stephen, "and Roger will be bringing in more after New Year's."

There was little further explanation. It seemed as if they were compelled by a force greater than the will power of either, greater than the silent influence of Caroline or the blinding force of that book on the parlor table. Yes, they did go and they ordered that set of dishes—that with the money Stephen had expected to spend on the leather-bound Scott and with Babette's money saved for the edition de luxe of Dickens they went and, after a half hour with a patient saleswoman, they bought everything that any clever bride ever needed to make a little flat kitchen complete.

Then they turned their steps homeward toward Caroline.

"Perhaps we can arrange it in January—would you, Babette? I've got enough saved for the bedroom set, and with the dishes and the kitchen things I've enough for the other things. Do you suppose your mother—"

"There was a pause for traffic made it hard to understand; then in a hush: "There's something in that Tennyson on the parlor table that goes like this: "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, And God fulfills Himself in many ways."

"Perhaps mother will see it that way, and I brought this little card home. Mother is very patriotic."

And, strangely enough, Caroline made no protests, so busy she was at once in reading what the book on good form had to say on "wedding etiquette."

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CONFESSIONS OF A WAR BRIDE

HUNDRETH-EIGHTH CHAPTER.

I Resolve to Watch the Great Game from the Sidelines Only.

Work is certainly a wholesome tonic. Had I been idle the day after the concert, I might have grown rebellious enough to divorce my husband at once—or else repentant enough to resolve to be a slave to him. It was a toss-up as to which mood would predominate, in idleness. But, by the simple process of taking envelopes out of files and then putting them all back in again, I regained my poise, and was able, when night came, to make a very sensible and practical rule of conduct for myself:

Never again, no matter how much I like a man, will I let him make a fool of me.

But I protested to myself that I did not regret. What had happened was only a daring dash over the forbidden border of sex attraction. I did not feel particularly that my virtue wore a scar. And yet, could I ever tell Bob?

As a wife who had let herself go in a flirtation, I ought, according to the unwritten laws of matrimony, confess to my husband at my first opportunity, and accept his forgiveness humbly and gratefully, if I had luck enough to get it; otherwise, to abide patiently by any decree he might make.

But, as a very independent young woman, not at the moment very well pleased with the world in general, I made what I called a fair bargain with myself.

If Bob, when he comes back, tells me that Katherine Miller nursed him for two weeks in France, then I will confess to him that Certeis kissed me. The incidents seemed of equal importance to me. Bob's secrecy somehow excused my own.

I resolved to take my adventures in another way; hereafter, I would seek something moderate and safe for a girl to follow, like hunting jewels in a derelict submarine.

To be sure, the search for the secrets of sex attraction wasn't so very difficult. Men's heads are not so very hard to turn. Probably I could make a dozen men, each in his different way, as devoted as Certeis.

But I shook my head. A girl could be very curious about this subject and get much enlightenment without being either a parasite or a vampire. And I certainly didn't want to look like

Mrs. Calfinch at the age of forty! My own experiment with an "affair" hadn't turned out very well; it had been short and confusing; but, rather than risk looking like Mrs. Calfinch, I would be content, hereafter, to watch other women, married or single, play the great game. That was as near as I could come to repenting what had happened.

In my room, with my mail, I found a small box when I came home from work. Once it would have excited me. I smiled to recall that every girl, from Cinderella to the Queen of Hearts, expects a mysterious gift some time—a valentine, flowers or a box of bonbons—sent by an unknown admirer who is dying of love for her.

I lingered over the box before I opened it, almost hoping that Certeis was sending it, and perhaps I was actually disappointed when I tore off the wrapping and disclosed the lapis stone in the silver ring which the German spy had given me. The card with it read, "You win!"

The circumstance was startling as well as confusing. I valued the ring greatly, and I hated to lose it, but why should the thief who had snatched it from my finger take such pains to send it back to me?

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DOINGS OF THE DUFFS—(DANNY TAKES A PEEK)—BY ALLMAN.

